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Described briefly in this article are such higher education innovations in five Far Eastern countries as (1) educational research organizations, (2) college entrance examinations, (3) international exchange programs (including those with the United States), (4) college standards and accreditation, (5) language laboratory use and equipment, (6) educational facilities, and (7) college developmental patterns. (AF)

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OBSERVATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FAR EAST

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Late in 1965, I completed a five-week trip to the Far East to visit universities, and to meet with the U.S. and foreign nationals engaged in educational exchange. My itinerary, which was in part determined by the fact that I was going to participate in the NAFSA sponsored workshop on Evaluation of Asian Educational Credentials held at the East-West Center in December, included Japan, Korea, the Republic of China, Hong Kong, and the Philippines.

While the trip was too short to permit an intensive study of educational developments in those countries, it did afford the opportunity to meet at some length with university administrators and faculty, foreign government personnel, the staffs of the United States Educational Commissions or Foundations, and members of the Educational Exchange Branch of the American embassies and the U.S.I.S. offices. The most vivid impression which resulted from those meetings is that there exists in all of the countries groups of vigorous leaders and university administrators who are critically reviewing and intent upon improving the systems of education and their individual institutions. In the area of educational exchange, the salient characteristic is the constant effort to identify needs in the countries and to select those candidates best qualified to undertake study in the United States.

Since there is not sufficient space to discuss the educational systems or institutions in depth, this article will be confined to a brief description of some of the visits made and impressions gained.

JAPAN

In Japan two organizations have been established in the past three years which have as their objective a critical examination of key aspects of the educational system. The first, the Educational Test Research Institute, has as its primary aim the preparation and administration of objective aptitude and achievement tests as a means of evaluating candidates for admission to universities. This is being done with an eye to improving the unusually severe university entrance examination system which has been increasingly criticized in recent years, and to provide better career guidance for students. With regard to the entrance examination system some Japanese educators expressed the view that there was some chance that it might be abolished in the foreseeable future, but others quickly discounted this possibility.

The second organization is the National Institute for Educational Research which operates independently but under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. Located in a new building in Tokyo, this organization primarily carries out independent research on the curriculum, text books and other aspects of elementary and secondary education. The results of this work are published in periodic bulletins, and formulated in recommendations to the Ministry of Education. In addition, its considerable library, which includes a collection of textbooks used throughout the history of modern Japan, serve as a source for visiting scholars.

Visits to Keio and Waseda universities provided the opportunity to learn about the activities of two institutions which have a strong international orientation. Both make special provision for foreign students to undertake regular academic study either under a formal exchange program with particular American institutions or on an independent basis.

The growth of international exchange activities at Keio University resulted in 1964 in the establishment of a new International Center which has the dual purpose of coordinating the activities of the University with foreign institutions of higher learning, and instructing foreign students in Japanese language and culture. Among those activities is an exchange of students — begun in 1956 with Stanford University — that is conducted by an autonomous student organization in conjunction with the International Center. It is a point of pride at Keio that the first exchange program was initiated and carried on by the students themselves.

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The International Division of Waseda University was established for the express purpose of providing exchange facilities for many American colleges, and especially the Great Lakes College Association and the California State Colleges. Between 1963 and 1965 over 100 American students took part in the Divisions' program, in which all courses are taught in English. As at Keio, the admission requirements and standards of the program offered are high, and conducted so as to meet the requirements of the institutions from which the students come.

KOREA

In Korea visits were made to Seoul National, Korea and Yonsei Universities, which are among the best educational institutions in the country. The leadership of all three is extremely vigorous and clearly dedicated to overcoming the many difficulties which characterize the existing educational facilities. Prime among these are, of course, a shortage of classrooms, inadequate laboratories and libraries, and the development of strong faculties in some fields.

As in Japan one of the most striking features of the Korean educational system is the severity of the university entrance examination system. For example, this year more than 70,000 students will compete to fill approximately 35,000 places available for first year students. This represents a ratio of more than two to one, and in the better institutions it will run 3.5-4.5 to one, with some faculties registering a ratio of more than 15 to one. In contrast to Japan, however, the examination is uniform for all universities, and the enrollment capacity is set by the Education Ministry rather than by the individual institutions.

The pressure such a system exerts on a student is clear. Passing the examination is, therefore, more than any other factor, a good indication of the ability of those who gain entrance to a university. But, that ability is often not evident in the transcripts of Korean students, which frequently carry an inordinate number of "C" and "D" grades. While certainly no attempt can be made to infer that all institutions adhere to a strict system of grading or that there isn't great variation in their quality, it should be understood that in the better universities it may not be unusual for a student to receive such grades. This is true, for example, in the case of the most outstanding institution, Seoul National University (particularly the College of Law), and in others such as Korea University and Pusan National University.

Much has already been written about the fact that once a Korean or Japanese student succeeds in gaining entrance to a university he rarely fails to graduate, no matter how poorly he performs. While this view was substantiated to a certain extent in both countries, it is not true of the better institutions in either country, and many factors must be considered in evaluating the performance of students who come out of such a system.

One factor which has a bearing on the performance of many students in Korea is the fact that they spend a considerable amount of time working in order to pay university fees or to provide for basic needs. Very often they work as tutors of high school students who are preparing to take the entrance examinations. At one university it was estimated that 30-40 percent of the students do such work on a regular basis.

Among recent developments in Korea is the effort being made by three universities, Yonsei, Ewha Womens and Korea, to cooperate in doing research on educational problems. In addition, the same three are seeking to establish an organization similar to the American Association of University Presidents, with the intent of having it act as an advisory body on problems of higher education.

TAIWAN

Visits in Taipei, to four language laboratories provided an insight into what is being done in that area, and particularly in English language instruction. The facilities visited are located at the English Language Center, Provincial Taiwan Normal University, Tamkang College of Arts and Science, and Fu Jen University. The English Language Center, which was originally established by A.I.D., is an independent organization which regularly offers short-term intensive instruction in English, and conducts the testing of students intending to come to the United States for study. The fact that the Center limits its activities to instruction and testing allows the able administration to meet a critical need in a country from which approximately 2,000 students come each year to study in the United States.

The laboratory facilities at the universities are necessarily attached to the language departments and hence fulfill multiple functions even though the emphasis is on English. The facilities of each vary, but all are equipped with 30 to 60 two-way listening booths and monitoring devices; all are conducted by very competent instructors.

The laboratory at Tamkang College was in fact just opened in November on the occasion of the 15th Anniversary celebration. It is, therefore, the most modern and includes closed circuit television units in each booth, as well as the most advanced recording equipment. The laboratory at Fu Jen University, while not as new, is directed by an expert linguist who has done considerable original research in his field and introduced new methods of language instruction. The university, which is a catholic institution, is in the process of being established in Taiwan, and has yet to graduate its first class. It had of course a long tradition on mainland China until the communist take-over, and is

setting out to duplicate that in its new location. The entire campus is new. New classes are being admitted and enrollment expanded as the facilities are completed. In the early stages emphasis was placed on the development of scientific laboratory facilities, and they are by far the best and most complete seen at any university I visited in the five countries.

The university entrance examination system in Taiwan, known as the Joint University Entrance Examination, is similar to those of Japan and Korea both in form and intensity of competition. However, it is different in that it serves to qualify students for all universities and each student has the option to list as many universities and particular departmental preferences within each as he choose or believes necessary to insure he will gain admission. Furthermore, as the university attend is often considered more important than the field studied, a student may well indicate a departmental preference in which he really is not interested simply to have the opportunity to attend one of the leading universities. One ramification of this is that a Chinese student seeking admission to U.S. universities may want to undertake study in a field different from his undergraduate major.

HONG KONG

In Hong Kong, the great increase in population in the past 15 years — from 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 — has placed tremendous pressures on the entire system of education. This has resulted in the expansion and development of new schools on all levels.

In the area of higher education the most interesting development is the growth of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, which was formed in 1963 through the merger of three former post-secondary colleges. These are Chung Chi, United and New Asia. In contrast to the University of Hong Kong, which is the senior institution, the Chinese University offers a four- instead of three-year program leading to the bachelor's degree. Presently, there are three separate campuses, but by 1970 they will all be located in a single campus situated outside of Kowloon City. Chung Chi is already located on the site, which commands a beautiful view of a bay and the surrounding mountains. Total enrollment at this time is about 1,500 but it is expected to reach 2,500 over the next few years.

The leadership of these colleges is exceptional, and a visit to United College especially, proved that their first objective is to achieve excellence. Also, there appears to exist a healthy sense of competition between the colleges which should also further the development of a strong unitary university.

Each college will maintain departments in all fields, but it is also expected that each will develop particular areas of strength. To take advantage of this, students will continue to have the freedom during the last two years of their study to select courses in each of the colleges. Courses will continue to be taught in English, Mandarin, and Cantonese, and all graduates are expected to be bilingual. As it develops the University will help considerably to meet the exceptional educational needs of Hong Kong.

PHILIPPINES

Higher education in the Philippines is characterized by the three major types of institutions. These are: public, private sectarian and private non-sectarian. Some of the public institutions such as the University of Philippines, are governed by boards of regents on which the Government is represented since the Secretary of Education and others are *ex-officio* members. Also, they receive government financial support. The private schools which do not receive government support are supervised by the National Department of Education through its Bureau of Private Schools.

In addition, both types of private schools have grouped into voluntary associations. Of the sectarian, the Catholic institutions have formed the Catholic Education Association of the Philippines with a membership of 120 colleges and eight universities. The Protestant and Evangelical related institutions have formed the Association of Christian Schools and Colleges with a membership of 45 institutions. Some of the private institutions have cooperated to form the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities (PACU) with membership of 39 schools. There are, however, approximately 210 other private non-sectarian institutions which are not members of any association, PACU is attempting to have some of them join its association.

Since there is no national accrediting body in the Philippines, each association has assumed this function for its own area of activities. The Government, through the Bureau of Private Schools, does establish minimum standards pertaining to curricula and physical plant, but these are relatively meaningless in terms of accreditation. The progress of the private associations in accreditation has not been uniform. The Catholic group seemingly has done the most in this area and the Protestant Association has started a program and already accredited one university. The private Association, however, is only now formulating its standards in final form.

The above, however, should not be interpreted to mean that there are not universities of high quality in the Philippines. Many of them would meet U.S. standards of accreditation, and they graduate very competent students.

Additional developments in Philippine education include the construction of new facilities on a number of campuses, and a continuing effort to establish new departments in particular universities and strengthen existing ones.

Clearly, tremendous problems exist in higher education in each of the countries visited. These have been indicated above to some extent, but it should be noted that at almost every university visited there were comments on the lack of funds, the need for new laboratory facilities, libraries and resource material and, perhaps most important, the need for better trained faculties. With regard to the latter point, some complaints heard from younger faculty trained in the United States were that they were not able to rise in their departments or in other ways fully utilize their training. But overall, there seems to exist a strong belief that these difficulties can be overcome.

Thanks

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